
Transportation Committee

ESB 5423

Brief Description: Regulating special license plates.

Sponsors: Senators Haugen and Swecker.

Brief Summary of Engrossed Bill

- Changing certain processes for special vehicle license plates.

Hearing Date: 3/23/05

Staff: Teresa Berntsen (786-7301).

Background:

The Special License Plate Review Board was created in the 2003 session and charged with reviewing applications from groups requesting the creation of a special vehicle license plate. The Board must verify that the organization and proposed plate meet criteria set by state law, and then forwards the approved application to the legislature.

A special license plate applicant must either:

1. pre-pay the implementation costs; or
2. submit signature sheets representing 2,000 intended plate purchases and an application fee of \$2,000.

For those applicants who do not prepay, the initial revenue generated from the plate sales must be deposited into the Motor Vehicle Account until the state has been reimbursed for implementation costs. The state must be reimbursed within two years or the plate will be put on probation for one year. If the state has not been fully reimbursed at the end of the probationary period, the plate must be discontinued.

The Department of Licensing (DOL) offers disabled parking emblem versions of special license plates to persons who qualify for disabled parking privileges. Persons applying for a disabled parking emblem for a special license plate must pay the appropriate special license plate fee.

The DOL offers personalized plates for an additional fee.

Summary of Bill:

The DOL is authorized to offer personalized special license plates. Persons purchasing a personalized special license plate must pay both the fee for the special plate and the fee for a personalized plate. Ten dollars of the personalized special plate fee must be distributed to the newly created Pedestrian and Bicycle Grant Program account. Funds from this account go to the

Department of Transportation to be disbursed to governmental subdivisions for the creation or expansion of bicycle and pedestrian pathways and projects.

The DOL must offer a disabled parking emblem for both personalized license plates and special plates that are personalized.

The special license plate design service fee is reduced from \$1,500 to \$200 dollars for the first six renditions of a plate, and to from \$500 to \$100 dollars per additional rendition.

The special license plate application requirements are changed in the following ways:

1. the application option of submitting signature sheets with 2,000 signatures and an application fee of \$2,000 is removed;
2. an applicant must provide 3,500 signatures with prepayment;
3. an applicant for a license plate collection must provide 3,500 signatures multiplied by the number of plates in the collection.

The Special License Plate Review Board is required to make a policy recommendation to the DOL regarding limiting the ability of a governmental entity or organization to apply for more than one special license plate. The DOL must adopt a rule pursuant to the Board's recommendation.

The Special License Plate Review Board is prohibited from accepting or approving any applications until June 1, 2007. The legislature may not enact a special plate during this time unless the plate has been approved by the Special License Plate Review Board before February 15, 2005.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: Section 1 of this act takes effect March 1, 2007. The remaining sections take effect after ninety days after the adjournment of session in which the bill is passed.